



City of San Marcos

630 E. Hopkins
San Marcos, Texas 78666

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Melissa Millecam, Communications/ Intergovernmental Relations Director
512.393.8105 mmillecam@sanmarcostx.gov

Preparing for Freezing Weather

With cold temperatures forecast for later this week, now is the time to prepare to protect your home and to pay attention to weather reports.

Residents should take precautions to protect people, pets, plants and pipes.

- Make sure children are dressed appropriately for the cold weather
- Have safe heating equipment available inside
- Check smoke detectors
- Winterize your windows and doors with caulking and weather stripping
- Make sure pets have adequate shelter and warmth, food and water
- Cover vulnerable outdoor plants or move them indoors
- Wrap outdoor pipes in newspapers or insulation and cover with plastic
- Let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing

Protecting pipes:

An eighth-inch crack in a pipe can leak up to 250 gallons of water a day. By taking a few simple precautions, you can save yourself the mess, money and aggravation frozen pipes can cause.

- Insulate pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic. These exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing. The more insulation you use, the better protected your pipes will be.
- Heat tape or thermostatically-controlled heat cables can be used to wrap pipes. Be sure to use products approved by an independent testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc., and only for the use intended (exterior or interior). Closely follow all manufacturers' installation and operation instructions.
- Seal leaks that allow cold air inside near where pipes are located. Look for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents and pipes. Use caulk or insulation to

keep the cold out and the heat in. With severe cold, even a tiny opening can let in enough cold air to cause a pipe to freeze.

- Disconnect garden hoses and, if possible, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house. If you don't have a separate valve to turn off outside water, wrap or cover faucets or hose bibs with an insulating material.
- Letting a faucet drip during extreme cold weather can prevent a pipe from bursting. Opening a faucet will provide relief from the excessive pressure that builds between the faucet and the ice blockage when freezing occurs. A dripping faucet wastes some water, so only pipes vulnerable to freezing (ones that run through an unheated or unprotected space) should be left with the water flowing.
- Open cabinet doors to allow heat to get to pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.

If you're planning on being away from home during the cold weather:

- Set the thermostat in your house no lower than 55°F.
- Ask a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough to prevent freezing.

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